

Dear Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Miner, Representative France and members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Kristie Reid and I work at CCARC as a Day Program Manager. CCARC was founded in 1952 and we provide an array of services for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the state budget as I am not able to attend the public hearing.

I want to thank you for the 4% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for community nonprofits that you fought to include in last year's budget. I'd like to ask you to honor the long term plan to address underfunding of community nonprofits and increase funding this year by an additional \$461 million, or 8% in total for FY23. The increase in this year's budget, while very much appreciated, has quickly been absorbed by rising costs. Over the last year, inflation rose by almost six percent, surpassing the COLA in the current year's budget.

This funding is needed now more than ever. Without it, we risk destabilizing our state's community service delivery system which has been upended by the pressures of COVID-19 and an exponential increase in the need for service in our communities. At the same time, we're facing unprecedented challenges recruiting and retaining staff of all skill levels and salaries.

As a Day Program Manager I provide oversight of 8 Full time Staff and 19 individuals with Developmental Disabilities. The need of my assistance and support from myself is imperative more than ever with the lack of staffing. Staff have been going above and beyond to help support the individuals we serve despite their pay rate and have been flexible with staying later due to lack of staffing Residentially. Our individuals deserve to be given the best quality of care and with that we need the funding to provide them with the staffing and resources. Documentation has suffered as well due to the lack of laptops and computers.

Nonprofit Providers funded by the Department of Developmental Services are grateful for the efforts of the Appropriations Committee and Governor Lamont to address wage and funding issues specific to services for the Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities population. Last year's Group Home Settlement provided significant funding to increase the minimum wage for direct support staff in DDS agencies.

However, the group home settlement also created significant challenges:

- First, the terms of the settlement provided wage increases of as much as 11.6% for entry level staff, which next year will increase to 14.5%. But the agreement only provides a 3% increase to everyone else. Staff who before July were making only slightly above the new minimum, often people who had years or decades of experience or managing other staff, found themselves suddenly paid almost the same as a new hire.
- Second, the funding dedicated a pool of dollars to enhance employee benefits, but to date none of that funding has been disbursed to providers. We understand it to total less than half what providers have told DDS they would need.

Thank you,

Kristie Reid
388 Perkins Ave Unit 5-3
Waterbury, CT 06704

Kristie Reid
Day Service Manager
CCARC, Inc.
480 Myrtle Street
New Britain, CT 06053

Tel: (860) 612-5355, ext. 252
Fax: (860) 826-6883

Making Dreams Come True Campaign - [Make your gift on-line!](#)



CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This E-Mail, including attachments, is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed and may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure, or distribution is prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please do not distribute it. Please notify the sender by E-Mail at the address shown and delete the original message. Thank you.